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Editorial

Stephen Gibson<sup>1</sup> & Laura G. E. Smith<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Heriot-Watt University

<sup>2</sup>University of Bath

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The *British Journal of Social Psychology* has global reach and reputation as an outlet for innovative social psychological research. As we take on editorship of the journal, we are immensely grateful to the outgoing editors, Hanna Zagefka and John Drury and their team, for the collegial and scholarly way they have guided the journal, and for passing it onto us whilst it is on such a stellar, upward trajectory. While impact factors are frequently mis-used, and relying on such a simple metric can be mis-leading, the recent increase in BJSP's impact factor to 2.213 is nevertheless further confirmation of the journal's status amongst the premier outlets in social psychology.

Needless to say, the impact factor is not our reason for taking up the mantle of editorship. We are proud to be incoming joint chief editors of BJSP because of this journal's identity: BJSP occupies a unique position within the field as a mainstream and well-respected journal that is open to submissions from across the full-spectrum of approaches in social psychology. This ethos is more important than ever, given the challenges that have arisen in recent years. In the wake of the so-called replication crisis, it is important that the journal is at the forefront of moves to increase trust, confidence and transparency in psychological science. Yet the way that these issues have often been considered in the discipline have tended to assume only one quite narrow version of psychological science (see Rad, Martingano, & Ginges, 2018). Increased attempts at statistical sophistication, the rise of pre-registration and attempts to incentivise replications are all valuable initiatives, yet there is a danger that in embracing these largely technical solutions to the problems facing the discipline, we inadvertently enshrine a single paradigm as the only legitimate approach to psychological science. For example, giving pre-eminence to replication can function to neglect the role of historical and cultural change (Greenfield, 2017). This would be particularly unfortunate for BJSP given its history as an outlet that has taken a non-dogmatic view of social psychology.

One of the abiding strengths of BJSP is its conceptual and methodological eclecticism, spanning the full range of social psychologies from social neuroscience to social constructionism, and everything in between. In this respect, we consider it important that BJSP continues to be an international outlet for the highest quality research, as well as for innovative (and sometimes riskier) work that has the potential to drive the field forward conceptually. This essential spirit of the BJSP was summed up particularly well by one of our predecessors who, when commenting on the journal's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2011, argued that publishing practices in the discipline risk creating a “culture of tedium” in which,

“I do not get to read papers that aim to incite my imagination and that invite me to think for myself. I get to read papers that are meant to do my thinking for me. I do not get bold work that might be a little leaky but rather watertight gobbets of nothing. On these grounds, most of the path breaking studies that we use to justify the existence of our discipline and that still fascinate us today ... would never have seen the light of day.”

(Reicher, 2011, p. 396)

We will strive to protect BJSP's clearly defined identity and ethos by developing the existing successful strategies introduced by previous editorial teams. One particularly noteworthy initiative, introduced a decade ago this year, has been the commissioning of Landmark Articles from distinguished social psychologists. These pieces not only include conceptual analysis but also critical reflections on methods, reviews and meta-analyses, and thus form a valuable resource for BJSP readers. This year's Landmark paper, appearing in this issue, is a critical review of social identity theory by Rupert Brown. As Hanna and John note in their accompanying editorial, this article was commissioned before the release of

Young and Hegarty's (2019) paper that brought to light details of Henri Tajfel's bullying and sexual harassment of many students and colleagues, and will – quite rightly – raise further uncomfortable questions.

In particular, we can quite imagine that many readers will find a prominent conceptual article based upon Tajfel's key theoretical contribution somewhat problematic, coming so soon after the publication of Young and Hegarty's findings. No-one would dispute the influence and significance of social identity theory, nor the fact that many, many others have contributed to its development both during Tajfel's lifetime, and even more so since his death. In publishing the Landmark article, the journal in no way endorses Tajfel's behaviour. Sexual harassment and bullying are antithetical to the ethos and values of the journal and such deplorable behaviour should be condemned. The paper derives from Brown's (2020) broader biographical project on Tajfel, which itself highlights further troubling aspects of Tajfel's behaviour. Yet in focusing on the behaviour of an individual – no matter how influential – there is the potential for neglecting the wider cultural elements of the discipline, and of academia more broadly, that continue to allow such behaviours to take place. In this respect, BJSP endorses the recent statement by the European Association of Social Psychology to call out such behaviours and to reform our disciplinary practices and culture to ensure that those who continue to engage in such offensive behaviour are held to account.

Our own attempts to engage with these issues are necessarily indirect, but we hope to continue to embed the principles of inclusivity, diversity and critical reflection on the discipline into the way in which the BJSP operates. Ultimately, this aligns very strongly with the traditional spirit and ethos of the journal, and so in many respects this is a process of continuing the great work of our predecessors. However, it is worth being explicit about four specific mechanisms through which we hope to be able to continue to develop and reflect the vibrancy and diversity of social psychology. First, we encourage submissions that incorporate

reflexivity around the assumptions and values embedded within research practices in social psychology. As we noted above, the recent difficulties encountered by the discipline are about much more than simple replication failures, and if the response is essentially “the same, only more so”, then we risk merely sweeping these issues under the carpet for, at most, perhaps another generation. Without a more thorough re-consideration of research cultures across methodological and conceptual traditions, and of the inherently social psychological nature of doing social psychological research (Klein, Doyen, Leys, de Saldanha da Gama, Miller, Questienne & Cleeremans, 2012), these problems are unlikely to be addressed. In doing so, we aim to build and expand BJSP’s inclusivity and diversity. We encourage submissions of research papers from authors around the globe, using diverse methods and theories, and from scholars working with non-WEIRD samples (Rad, et al., 2018).

Second, we encourage submissions that respond directly and in a timely way to current social issues, and we will continue to foreground such work in the form of virtual special issues. This year, following in the footsteps of the previous editorial team, we will be publishing a virtual special issue to coincide with the General Meeting of the European Association of Social Psychology.

Third, we will continue to offer special sections. We will release annual calls for special section proposals that address current social issues and that aim to develop innovative conceptual frameworks. Our first such call can be found in this very issue.

Finally, we will retain the new initiatives brought in by the outgoing editors to provide the opportunity for pre-registration of studies, and to link datasets to articles. These strategies recognise the importance of transparency, data-sharing and research integrity, and we will review these initiatives to ensure that they are fit for purpose for the variety of research traditions published in BJSP, including qualitative research.

In doing so, we will strive to protect BJSP's identity, expand on the inclusivity and diversity of its submissions, and enhance its success, solidifying its place as an international leader in social psychology. We are strongly committed to sustaining BJSP's reputation and identity as a source of diverse, high quality social psychology, and as a rigorous and fair outlet for authors. The pressures of modern academic life may increasingly present temptations that lead us towards those "watertight gobbets of nothing", but BJSP has consistently shown there can be another way. We hope to continue these traditions of providing an outlet for work that incites the imagination and inspires creative, independent thought.

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